

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An ice-bagging apparatus, comprising:

means for producing ice;

5 means for bagging the produced ice; and

means for dispensing the bagged ice.

2. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said means for producing ice is at least one icemaker.

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3. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 1, further comprising at least one hopper for collecting the produced ice and for funneling the collected ice into said means for bagging, said at least one hopper further possessing at least one ice

15 agitator.

4. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 3, wherein said means for bagging comprises at least one box slidably engaged with at least one tray positioned proximate to said at least one box, said at least one box positioned proximate to said at least one hopper and capable of receiving ice therefrom, and wherein said at least one tray is positioned at an angle relative to said at least one box.

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5. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 4, wherein said at least one box possesses at least one gravitationally encouraged drainage channel.

5 6. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 4, wherein said at least one box moves relative to said at least one tray, wherein said movement results in the passage of ice through at least one aperture in said at least one tray and into at least one bag, said at least one bag received from said means for bagging via
10 at least one roller conveyor and at least one bag roll.

7. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 6, wherein said means for bagging further possesses at least one hatch positioned proximate to said at least one aperture in said at
15 least one tray, wherein said at least one bag received from said means for bagging is positioned proximate to said at least one hatch and wherein said at least one hatch pivotally channels ice from said at least one aperture in said at least one tray into said at least one bag.

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8. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 7, wherein said at least one bag is opened via at least one blower and wherein said at least one hatch prevents closure of said at least one bag during the filling thereof.

9. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 1, further comprising at least one sealer to seal at least one bag filled with ice.

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10. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 1, further comprising at least one rotator for receiving bagged ice from said means for bagging, said at least one rotator being at least one container rotatable via at least one motor.

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11. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 10, wherein said at least one rotator rotates via said at least one motor to deposit bagged ice into said means for dispensing.

15 12. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 11, wherein said means for dispensing is at least one thermally insulated unit.

13. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said means for dispensing is at least one storage unit.

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14. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 1, wherein said means for dispensing is at least one vending machine.

15. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 1, further comprising at least one control panel for computerized and electronic monitoring, controlling and operation of said apparatus.

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16. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 1, further comprising means for sensing operational parameters of said apparatus and for sensing utilization of a selected make and type of bag, said means for sensing selected from the group
10 consisting of photoelectric eyes, laser technology or barcode technology.

17. An ice-bagging apparatus, comprising:
means for producing ice;
15 means for bagging the produced ice;
means for dispensing the bagged ice;
means for controlling operation of said apparatus; and
means for sensing operational parameters of said apparatus.

20 18. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 17, wherein said means for producing ice is at least one icemaker.

19. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 17, further comprising at least one hopper for collecting the produced ice

and for funneling the collected ice into said means for bagging, said at least one hopper further possessing at least one agitator.

5 20. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 19, wherein said means for bagging possesses at least one box positioned to receive ice from said at least one hopper and wherein said box is slidably engaged with at least one tray, said at least one tray positioned at an angle relative to said at least one box.

10 21. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 20, wherein said at least one box possesses at least one angled drainage channel.

15 22. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 20, wherein said at least one box slidably moves relative to said at least one tray, the ice is passed from said box through at least one aperture in said at least one tray and into at least one bag, said at least one bag fed from said means for bagging via at least one roller conveyor and supplied by at least one bag roll.

20 23. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 22, wherein said means for bagging further possesses at least one hatch positioned to pivotally channel ice from said at least one

aperture formed in said at least one tray into said at least one bag.

24. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 23, wherein said at
5 least one bag is blown open and said at least one hatch facilitates the deposit of ice therein.

25. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 17, further comprising at least one heat sealer to heat-seal at least one
10 bag filled with ice.

26. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 17, further comprising at least one rotator for receiving bagged ice from said means for bagging, said at least one rotator being at least
15 one motorized rotatable container.

27. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 26, wherein said at least one rotator rotates via at least one motor and deposits bagged ice into said means for dispensing.

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28. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 27, wherein said means for dispensing is at least one thermally insulated unit.

29. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 17, wherein said means for dispensing is at least one storage unit.

30. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 17, wherein said
5 means for dispensing is at least one vending machine.

31. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 17, wherein said means for controlling operation of said apparatus is at least one control panel for computerized and electronical monitoring,
10 controlling and operation of said apparatus.

32. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 17, wherein said means for sensing accurate and proper operation of said apparatus and for sensing utilization of a selected make and
15 type of bag is selected from the group consisting of photoelectric eyes, laser technology or barcode technology.

33. An ice-bagging apparatus, comprising:

at least one icemaker;

20 at least one collecting mechanism for collecting ice produced by said at least one icemaker;

at least one bagging assembly for bagging the ice produced by said at least one icemaker;

at least one storing unit for storing the ice bagged by
said at least one bagging assembly;

at least one control panel for controlling operation of
said apparatus; and

5 at least one sensing mechanism for sensing operation of
said apparatus and for sensing bag parameters.

34. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 33, wherein said at
least one collecting mechanism is at least one hopper, said at
10 least one hopper capable of funneling ice into said at least one
bagging assembly, said at least one hopper further possessing at
least one agitator for agitating ice deposited therein.

35. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 34, wherein said at
15 least one bagging assembly possesses at least one box slidably
engaged with at least one tray positioned beneath said at least
one box, said at least one box positioned under said at least
one hopper and capable of receiving ice therefrom, and wherein
said at least one tray is situated at an angle.

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36. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 35, wherein said at
least one box possesses at least one drainage channel for
channeling melting ice and water away from solid ice deposited
into said at least one box by said at least one hopper, and

wherein said at least one tray assists in the drainage of melting ice and water from said at least one box as a result of said at least one tray being situated at an angle.

5 37. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 35, wherein said at least one box slides up said at least one tray for depositing ice from therein through at least one aperture formed in said at least one tray and thereafter into at least one bag, said at least one bag being fed through said at least one bagging
10 assembly via at least one roller conveyor and supplied by at least one bag roll.

 38. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 37, wherein said at least one bagging assembly further possesses at least one hatch
15 positioned under said at least one aperture formed in said at least one tray, wherein said at least one bag to be filled with ice is fed through said at least one bagging assembly and positioned under said at least one hatch, said at least one hatch capable of pivoting downward to channel ice falling
20 through said at least one aperture into said at least one bag.

 39. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 38, wherein said at least one hatch physically holds open the mouth of said at least

one bag to facilitate the deposit of ice therein, said mouth of said at least one bag initially opened via at least one blower.

40. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 33, further
5 comprising at least one heat sealer to heat-seal at least one bag filled with ice.

41. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 33, further
comprising at least one rotator for receiving bagged ice from
10 said at least one bagging assembly, said at least one rotator being at least one container rotatable via at least one motor.

42. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 41, wherein said at least one rotator rotates via said at least one motor to deposit
15 bagged ice into said at least one storing unit.

43. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 42, wherein said at least one storing unit is at least one thermally insulated unit.

20 44. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 33, wherein said at least one storing unit is at least one vending machine.

45. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 33, wherein said at least one control panel for controlling operation of said

apparatus allows computerized and electronical monitoring,
controlling and operation of said apparatus.

46. The ice-bagging apparatus of Claim 33, wherein said at
5 least one sensing mechanism is selected from the group
consisting of photoelectric eyes, laser technology or barcode
technology.